

News Release

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Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee Presents Final Recommendations for Board of Supervisors

Fairfax, VA. The Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee has completed its mission to develop a set of recommendations for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. These recommendations will be critical in preserving over 1,000 homes by 2007, keeping them affordable to those who live and work in Fairfax County. Acknowledging the extraordinary rate at which the County is losing its limited supply of affordable housing, the Committee members worked quickly to develop their recommendations. The recommendations will be presented to the Board of Supervisors at today's meeting – two months earlier than initially anticipated.

The extraordinary depth of expertise on the Committee gave rise to four subcommittees specializing in various aspects of affordable housing: financing, land use, legislative, and non-monetary incentives. Each subcommittee's expert members were able to lend collectively unparalleled advice and ideas for the benefit of County policy makers that will benefit County residents in need of affordable housing.

The following list of recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their review, with a request from the Action Committee to make affordable housing preservation a priority policy:

1. Dedicate **one penny of the real estate tax rate** to the preservation of affordable housing effective in Fiscal Year 2006.
2. Revise the **Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan** to provide development flexibility and incentives for projects that include affordable/workforce housing, and to broaden the definition of affordable/workforce housing.
3. Provide **a tool box of incentives for preservation**, which include zoning and regulatory flexibility and financing techniques. Provide **form-based zoning options** and **overlay districts** to enable certain design standards to facilitate development approvals.
4. Create an **Affordable Housing "SWAT" team**, comprised of business and community stakeholders and County staff, **and fund an ombudsman position** at the Department of Housing and Community Development to act as the point person to prevent the loss of at-risk affordable housing.

5. Develop incentives to encourage the owners of existing Affordable Dwelling Units to record a new covenant to **extend the control period of the unit to 30 years** and/or **re-start the control period** when they sell to a new owner.
6. Develop incentives to encourage the preservation of affordable units in **condominium conversions** within existing affordable garden apartment stock in the County.
7. Establish a working group to develop recommendations on how to restructure **Virginia's Low Income Housing Tax Credit** and increase the usage of the **Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit** program, with an emphasis on preservation.
8. Support **House Joint Resolution Number 719** directing the Virginia Housing Commission to study the authority of localities to provide incentives to preserve affordable housing.
9. Support the establishment of the **Governor's Virginia Community Development Bank** and specific Virginia General Assembly bills that will expand the Bank to urban areas like Fairfax County.
10. Revise the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance (ADUs) to **extend the control period** to 30 years for new ADUs.
11. Broaden the use of **accessory dwelling units** as a way to effectively expand the affordable housing stock at little or no cost to meet a range of housing needs.
12. Establish an **advocacy and public education campaign** to promote the need for affordable/workforce housing and the public-private resources to fully fund these recommendations.

The forwarding of these recommendations represents the closing of the Fairfax County Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee. For more information on the Committee's work, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/rha/pac.htm.

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations, call 703.246.5101 (TTY: 703.385.3578). Please allow seven working days in advance of the event in order to make the necessary arrangements.

